

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE:** Denese Taylor-Moye, Co- Chair; Scott Burns, Co-chair; M. Evette Brantley; AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia; Aidee Nieves, Anthony Paoletto, Jose Casco, Council President Thomas McCarthy

**OTHERS:** Kenneth Flatto, Finance Director; Nestor Nkwo, OPM; Lynn Haig, OPED; Bill Coleman, OPED; Tom Gill, OPED; Atty. Michael Andreana, Pullman and Comely; Tom Gaudett, Mayor's Office, Council Member John Olson, Angel dePara, CAO's Office; Council Member Jeanette Herron (6:36 p.m.)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Taylor-Moye called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. A quorum was present.

Mr. Flatto came forward to explain that he had two new substitute resolutions for items 186-15 and 187-15, and that on advice of counsel that he would introduce item 187-15 first since it was a modification to the Capital Plan and as such it made more sense to modify the plan outline before modifying its particulars. Mr. Flatto clarified that the changes in the resolution were intended to meet the preferences of the committee from the previous week's meeting.

**187-15 Proposed Approval of Amendment to Adopted FY2017-2021 Capital Plan.**

Mr. Nkwo reiterated the point that the new resolution reflected a modified plan as proposed. The new resolution for 187-15 "Approval of Amendment to Adopted FY2017-2021 Capital Plan was distributed.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADD A DOCUMENT TITLED "APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO ADOPTED FY2017-2021 CAPITAL PLAN" AS EXHIBIT 09-28-16-1.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

A map labeled Capital Investment Area was introduced by Mr. Coleman, the Deputy Director of OPED. Mr. Flatto explained the map was a revision to the previous week's map, which included changes requested by the committee.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADD A MAP TITLED "CAPITAL INVESTMENT AREA" AS EXHIBIT 09-28-16-2.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Flatto explained the map was a revision to the previous week's map, which included changes requested by the committee.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia asked whether the bond resolution took into account whether state and/or federal matching funds or restrictions. Mr. Flatto explained that the outline on the map only defines the area for which bonds may be issued and used. Attorney Andreana affirmed that view. Zoning and legal standards were not used in defining the area, only for the purposes of authorizing capital expenditures. Council President McCarthy reiterated that the city has thus established where it can spend these funds. Attorney Andreana also affirmed this point.

Council Member Brantley asked about the Congress St. Bridge plan. Mr. Flatto explained that the item was included in the resolution since some Council Members requested that it be included, but that it is not strictly in the downtown area.

Mr. Coleman added that new language that emphasized "getting the job done," including a five-year limit, at the request of Council Member Nieves. Council Member Brantley asked about costs. Mr. Coleman said he had heard the cost could be anywhere from \$40 million for a vehicular bridge to \$1-1.5 million for a pedestrian bridge.

Council President McCarthy stated that he was good with the language of the resolution in that it gave the administration flexibility but did not handcuff them. He also asserted that the map ought to be considered a part of the resolution.

Council Member Brantley asked Mr. Flatto if the \$18 million is what the city needs. Mr. Flatto explained that in addition to the \$18 million, the Council previously authorized \$2 million, so that the entire \$20 million should be enough for the city.

Council Member Olson asked about the Seaview Corridor sector and why it was not included on the map. Mr. Flatto explained that the Seaview Corridor funds are separate from the map, but a key aspect of the resolution.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO REMOVE THE DATE FROM PAGE 3 OF EXHIBIT 09-28-16-1.**  
**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **RECESS**

Council Member Taylor-Moye announced a recess at 6:00 p.m. She called the meeting back to order at 6:02 p.m.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO AMEND AGENDA ITEM 187-15 BY SUBSTITUTION WITH EXHIBITS #09-28-16-1 AND #09-28-16-2.**  
**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked for clarification on the figures. Mr. Flatto explained that there was about \$20 million dollars in Federal grants available but the grants required matching funding. He added that the City can use the matching funds as leverage for more funding.

Council Member Brantley asked about the sidewalks. Mr. Flatto said that the sidewalks were included in Agenda Item 186-15. Mr. Flatto said that Mr. Ricci was not able to attend the meeting.

Council Member Olson said that he felt it would be worthwhile to have a footbridge to Pleasure Beach. There are many residents that would like to be able to go to Pleasure Beach but cannot get there.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 187-15 AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**186-15 Proposed Approval of General Obligation Bonds – To Fund Certain Capital Improvement Projects.**

Mr. Flatto distributed copies of a revised resolution. He said that the only change was the breakout of the downtown resolutions.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER 186-15 APPROVAL OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AS EXHIBIT 09-28-2016-3.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Flatto reviewed the details. The \$18 million would be in addition to the \$1 million that had been approved in the Capital Plan in 2016. He said that he was asking for the bond authorization.

Mr. Flatto then listed all the projects that would be bonded including blight removal and demolition and road paving, culverts and sidewalks.

He then gave an overview of how the funds would be distributed and said that Mr. Ricci would be bringing forward a sidewalk paving program. Mr. Flatto said that the City has a liability issue when someone trips and falls. Council Member Brantley asked if more money could be allocated to the sidewalk ordinance and the home owners need help. She said that beautifying downtown will do no good if the neighborhoods are not also. Mr. Flatto said that the Committee could add up to \$2 million more if they wished to do so.

Council President McCarthy asked what the amount of funding that had been authorized. Mr. Flatto said that there was \$6 million approved for paving, culverts and intersections. Sidewalks were not included in that number. Mr. Nkwo said that the Capital Plan had been authorized funding in the past and that the Committee could increase the funding. He said that it would be prudent to bond and spend the money within 24 months.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that there are many sidewalks that are in very poor condition and many of the home owners are over 65 years of age.

Council Member Olson said if there isn't a plan, then there would be a problem. Mr. Flatto said that Public Facilities was working on a plan. Discussion followed about the condition of the sidewalks and potential replacement plans.

Council Member Olson asked if Mr. Coleman could formulate a plan for a sidewalk plan. Mr. Coleman said that this could be done.

Council Member Burns suggested that the line item for sidewalks be included and reducing the paving by \$1 million and allocate an additional \$1 million for the sidewalks. Mr. Flatto reminded everyone that paving season will start again next spring.

Council Member Burns suggested that a portion of the money be allocated for the neighborhoods and home owners. Discussion followed.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE LINE ITEM FOR THE SIDEWALKS IN THE PUBLIC FACILITIES BUDGET FOR ROADWAY REPAIRS.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ALLOCATE 2 MILLION TO THE SIDEWALK LINE BUDGET LINE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Council Member Herron joined the meeting at 6:36 p.m.*

Council Member Burns said that there would be \$2 million for sidewalks. This would result in \$9 million for the road paving budget. A brief discussion followed regarding the Public Facilities allocations.

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER BURNS MOVE TO MODIFY THE PUBLIC FACILITIES ROAD PAVING TO \$2.5 MILLION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO REVISE THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THE RESOLUTION FROM \$43,669,349 TO \$ 44,669,349 EVERYWHERE IN THE RESOLUTION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO INCREASE PUBLIC FACILITIES FROM \$12,619,347 TO \$13,619,347.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Flatto said that there would be an increase in the budget due to the bonding. He said that the good news that the bonding debt service was dropping. He said that the school projects were for 30 years and all the other ones were for 20 years. Discussion followed.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she would like to see all the private developers finish all their projects before allocating more money to them. She said that because of this, she would be voting against this.

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO AMEND 186-15 BY SUBSTITUTION WITH EXHIBIT 09-28-16-3 AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council Member Burns asked Mr. Coleman about whether he could share any information about where the money was going. Mr. Coleman said that there were guidelines in the Industry Standards. He distributed copies of the document titled Industry Standards and Guiding Projects.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ADD THE INDUSTRY STANDARDS AND GUIDING PROJECTS AS EXHIBIT 09-28-2016-4.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Coleman proceeded to review the details involved with leveraging public funds at a 2 to 1 ratio. He added that the City wants some control of the funding. In the past, Bridgeport changed some programs from outright grants to low interest loan programs. Mr. Coleman gave the example of the HOME program that the City changed from a grant program into a low interest loan program. The State has since followed suit by converting their CHAMP program from a grant program to a loan program.

Mr. Coleman then spoke about the Reasonable Rate of Return, which is generally around 15% for the developer. A gap is identified when there is a difference between the best rents and the property value. The public sector funds often fill the gap between those numbers. There are no assumptions made about taxes. Mr. Coleman then gave a brief overview of the Enterprise Zone sliding tax scale.

*Council President McCarthy left the meeting at 6:55 p.m.*

Mr. Coleman said that the overall issues with the macro financing was briefer.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO ENTER THE DOCUMENT TITLED ECONOMIC RETURN ON CITY CAPITAL INVEST AS EXHIBIT # 09-28-16-5.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER NIEVES SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Coleman said that the City is supposed to have the triple bottom line. He said that if the City invested \$18 million, they should expect about \$39 million in return. There was some modest expectation of commercial businesses downtown and an increase in housing. He reviewed the anticipated tax revenues for the City. Mr. Coleman reminded everyone that this was intended to be a broad overview.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was pleased that the buildings were being put in, but it would be important to have people friendly parking spaces. She asked if there were any plans for a parking garage. Mr. Coleman said that the City currently has a surplus of parking, and so was not there yet. It needs to be reviewed comprehensively. He said her point was well taken.

Council Member Brantley asked about the security building and preservation block. Mr. Coleman said that the building was being done by Spinnaker. Council Member Brantley said that the developer expected to park in the Holiday Inn, which was wrong. Mr. Coleman explained that the developer had a relationship with Holiday Inn and was renting the garage.

Council Member Olson asked if Mr. Kuzma had anything to say. Mr. Kuzma said he had no comments.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 186-15 AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services